10: d'Orleans--291 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 103

"Luang Prabang, or rather Muong Luang Prabang, meaning literally 'the royal town of Prabang,' so named after a much venerated idol (Muong Luoung), is a capital, and gives its name to a small State of Laos, or a Shan State, to use the English expression."

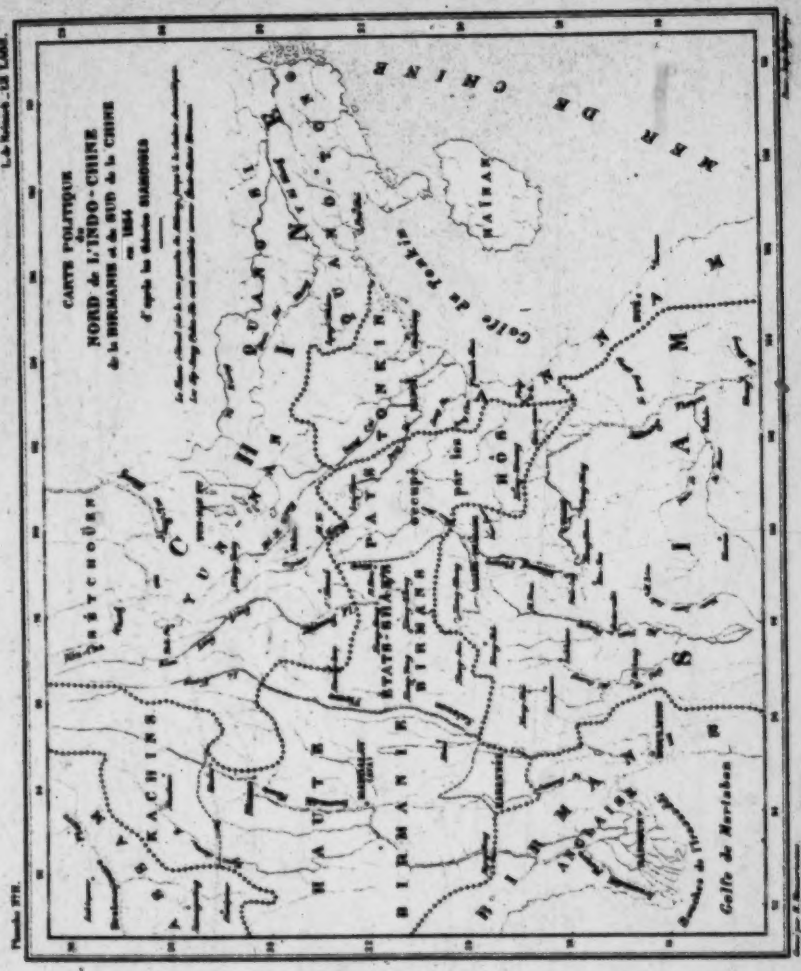
25: Brodrick--90 S-3 (1939) 1948 Laotians
116, 103, 491

"All the year round, you can get by car from Vinh on the Annam coast to Xieng-Khouang, the capital of Tran-ninh province, but you certainly cannot push through from Xieng-Kouang to Luang-Prabang except during the dry season. (1)

1. As you cannot get through as soon as the rains cease since, not only has the road-surface to be reconditioned in places, but some of the bridges have to be rebuilt. This route from Ving to Luang-Prabang is the Route coloniale No. 71, often called 'Queen Astrid's Highway,' since the road was laid out, or at least much improved, against the visit of the King and Queen of the Belgians in the '20's."

149: Reinach--10b G-3 (no date) 1901 AM1 Indochina
Laotians AM8

102
631

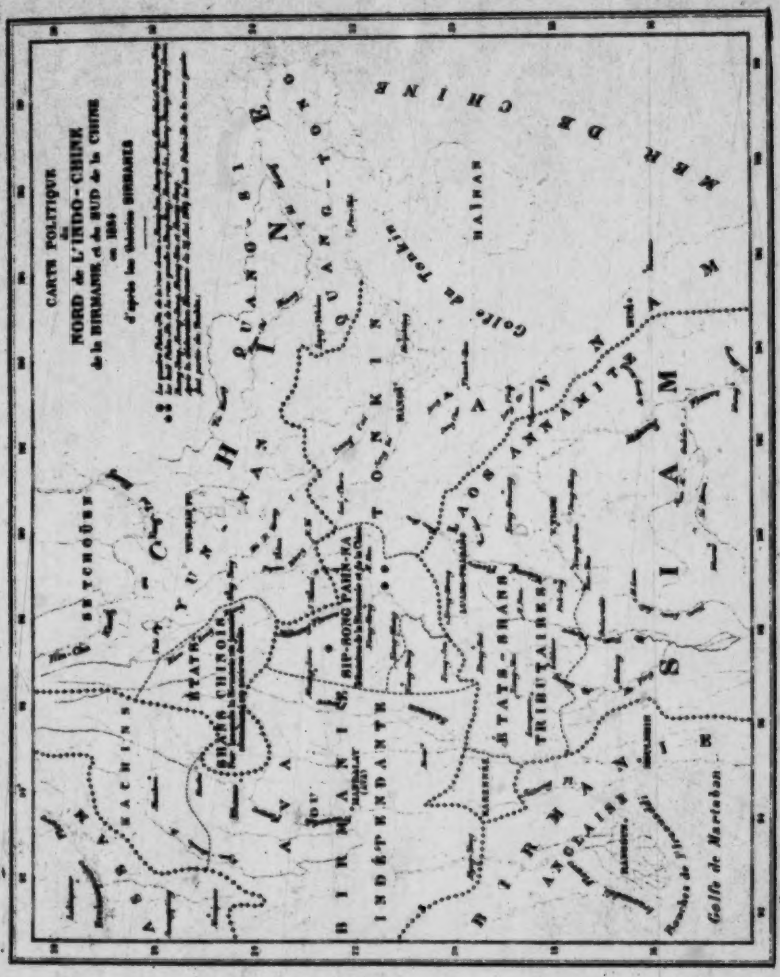


Political Map of the North of Indo-China, of Burma and of the South of China in 1884 according to Siamese theories.

Plate 2 /facing p. 16/

149: Reinach--15b G-3 (no date) 1901 AM1 Indochina
Laotians AM8

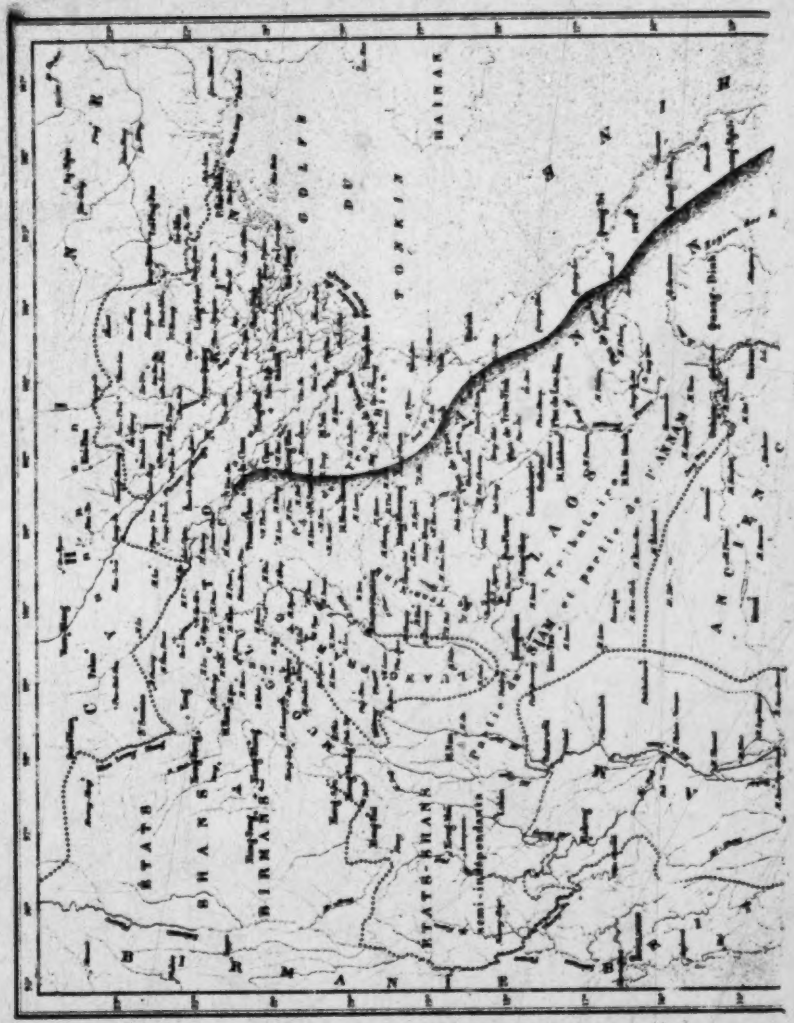
102
631



Political Map of the North of Indo-China, of Burma and of the South of China in 1884 according to Burmese theories.

Plate 3 /facing p. 24/

102
175
631



Political Map of Indo-China in 1893 before the Franco-Siamese Treaty of October 3.

Plate 4 Part A /between pp. 32 and 33/

643* Complaints against such tyranny, which had heretofore been un-
175* known in the region of Lan-Xang, reached his father-in-law the king
642 of Cambodia. The latter summoned his son-in-law to Angkor and in the name of the Buddhist precepts advised him to use /47/ moderation and "pity towards the weak" (1). Fa-Ngoun seemed to accept the

1. According to Auguste Pavie's translators, Fa-Ngoun was content merely to send an embassy to Angkor at the request of Queen Nang-Kéo.

lesson, was baptized in accordance with the rites of the Hinayana and himself urged that a Cambodian mission composed of clergymen, scholars and artisans be sent to Muong-Swa. Pha-Maha-Pasaman-Théla-Tiao, the head of the mission, brought the sacred books of orthodox Buddhism and a statue of Buddha which had been given to the Kmer sovereign by the king of Ceylon in the ninth century. This statue was the Prabang, which became the palladium of the kingdom of Lan-Xang (2).

2. When the mission passed through Vientiane the governor Phao is supposed to have requested and obtained the right to keep the statue in the city for three years. Many legends recount the voyage of the Prabang in diverse manners and disagree as to the route followed. Here again it may be a question of the Vien-Kham in Tran-Ninh.

346 The Prabang. When they reached their destination the Kmer
175* workers began the construction of a temple, the Vat-Gnot-Kéo, where
643* the Prabang was solemnly placed in 1358. But it was not until two
103 centuries later, when the seat of the capital was transferred to Vientiane by the king Setthathirat (1563), that the name of Luang-Prabang was given to the city.

643* /48/ When he returned to his States Fa-Ngoun proclaimed him-
175* self Supreme Chief of religion and resumed, with a severe hand al-
631 though never exceeding the bounds of firmness, the administration of the various territories which then made up the kingdom of Lan-Xang. These were, namely, Muong-Swa in the strict sense; Xieng-Khong in the north (present region of Houei-Sai); Vientiane, Hoi-Luang and Xieng-La (on the Mékong downstream from Vientiane), Muong-Kabang (Bassac) in the south; Kham-Keut (now the province of Cammon) and Muong-Van (Savannakhet) in the east.

133 There is only one mountainous region of note in its whole course through the plains. This is formed by the spur which forces it to describe the bend of Pak-Moun and, on the right bank, by the mountains of Bassac which tower precipitously above it. Then the river spreads out more and more until [54] it forms the altogether characteristic group of the Si-Pan-Don (four thousand islands) above the Khône waterfalls, where it falls down to its lower reach which is subject to the special conditions of the Ton-Lé-Sap risings.

• [103] The origin of the word Mékong is not certain. It is doubtless an abbreviation of Mé-Nam-Kong, that is to say, the mother of the waters which come from Kong (1).

(1) This does not refer to Khong, the former capital of Lower Laos, but to another Kong situated at about 22° 20' N. latitude and well known as a transit point for caravans going from Burma to China.

The total length of its course is approximately 4200 kilometers, about half of which belongs to Laos. It is one of the largest rivers in the world. The length of its course, which is approximately the same as that of the Amour or the Hoang-Hô, would place it tenth among all the world's rivers.

In addition to the region of Khong and the Khône waterfalls, where the river spreads out over ten kilometers and even more, there is an average breadth of 1200 to 1500 meters in the Bassac reach. In the Kemmarat rapids its average width is from 300 to 500 meters, but there are also narrows where it is scarcely 100 meters wide.

In the Vien-Tiane reach it has an average width of 300 to 800 meters, but between Vien-Tiane and Luang-Prabang it narrows down to less than 100 meters. Above Luang-Prabang and as far as Xieng-Khong its average width is only 150 to 250 meters. Then it spreads out again through low islands, to narrow down once and for all towards Tang-Hô.

The area of its basin has been estimated to be a million square kilometers.

"The rate of flow of the Mekong (2) has not yet been measured

[113] (2) Vivien de Saint-Martin, Nouveau Dictionnaire de géographie universelle, 1887.

with the same degree of precision as those of the Irrawaddy, the

daughter, Princess Nang Yot Keo. At an indeterminate date which must come between 1340 and 1350, he was given the command of an army destined to reconquer the kingdom of his fathers. According to the Laotian chronicle, the victorious advance of this army enabled Fa Ngoum to declare himself king of Lan Xan. He immediately demanded the submission of all the Thai princes of Mekong. The center of resistance to Fa Ngoum was Phai Nam (spiny bamboos) because of the impenetrable vegetable belt which protected it like veritable ramparts. Fa Ngoum seized it by means of the classical trick of ornamenting missiles with gold and silver, then pretending to retreat and then pouncing on the enemy at the moment when they had scattered to gather the precious metal. In memory of this episode, the town was baptized Vieng Kham which means "circled with gold" and which later became Vientiane, "circled with sandalwood." Fa Ngoum organized his kingdom with force and reigned as a despot. Complaints were made and the king of Cambodia advised him to be moderate. Fa Ngoum then requested that a mission be sent him from Cambodia consisting of religious and lettered men, and of artisans. This mission introduced the orthodox books of Buddhism and a statue of the Buddha (Prabang) which had been presented in the eleventh century to the Khmer sovereign by the king of Ceylon. Prabang thus became the safeguard of the kingdom.

Up until recent years this tradition led one to believe that the introduction of Buddhism into Laos dated from Fa Ngoum. The discovery of a certain number of Buddhist sculptures of Khmer manufacture of the twelfth century A. D., has destroyed this theory (see below: Introduction of Buddhism to Laos).

After a series of wars, Fa Ngoum died in 1373 at the age of fifty-eight. His successor Sam Sen Thai reigned from 1373 to 1416. He kept [16] peace in his kingdom and passed on to his successor a prosperous kingdom, well established and living in peace, and at the same time dreaded by its neighbors.

The fifteenth century saw a succession of sovereigns about whom history has nothing in particular to tell. Let us mention, however, a war with the emperor of Annam. The first part of the sixteenth century passes under the reign of King Phothisarath (1506-1547), a pious Buddhist. One of his most famous actions is the edict against the cult of Phis. Setthathirath came into power in 1548 after a war with the Burmese. His death was followed by a troubled period. The beginning of the seventeenth century is particularly obscure, but in 1637 a great king called Souligna Vongsa (1637-1694) ascended